

stances. They lived in Nicholson Gardens, which is a public housing development in Los Angeles. At 17 he had to become the father, the mother of the family. His youngest brother was 2 months old when she left the home. He has raised every one of them.

But he said yesterday the most important thing was his faith and commitment in God and that he had to fight through a court system to keep his sisters and brothers. And now he has become an assistant manager at Nicholas Gardens. But he specifically said to us yesterday that without his deep abiding belief in God, that he could not have made it, and that was the driving force keeping him going every day.

The President. Isn't that fascinating? Gosh.

Governor Ashcroft. Mr. President, we thank you very much for coming and just hearing a little bit of the reflection of what we've been hearing around America from the Commission and also hearing from individuals in Missouri. And these are the type of people, individuals who we've been hearing from in a variety of stops from one coast to the other. And they're inspiring to me in a lot of ways. They've fought through tough odds. Sometimes they've had bad starts. But the possibility of rescuing situa-

tions is coming on strong, putting families back together that had been apart, bringing children back into the home that had been in foster care.

We're inspired. You've given us a challenging but inspiring job. And we just want to thank you for letting us report to you on a little bit of an interim basis and letting us feel again the intensity of your personal concern on this issue.

The President. Well, I'm delighted. And thanks to the Commission members and also to the witnesses, or whatever we call them, these four families that shared this with us. I sit back there in Washington, and it really brings it home much more personally when you hear what individual families have done and are still doing.

As for you kids, next time we do this, it's going to be nice and cool. *[Laughter]* Next time that's the way it's going to be.

Thank you all so much.

Governor Ashcroft. We deliver the report in December. It will be cooler then.

The President. All right. That sounds far off now. *[Laughter]*

Note: The President spoke at 3:25 p.m. in Shelter Gardens Park.

Remarks at the Show Me State Games in Columbia

July 24, 1992

May I salute our great Governor and thank him and all of you for that warm welcome. And to Mary Ann McCollum, our Mayor, thank you, ma'am, for welcoming us to your city, making us feel so at home. May I also salute Gary Filbert, the executive director of these wonderful games; Dr. Jerry Brouder, the chancellor of the university, from whom we've heard. I thought Stephanie, Miss Missouri, did a fantastic job singing "The Star-Spangled Banner" over there. And while we're passing out tributes, I thought that Jordan and Greg did okay on the Pledge of Allegiance, too. Never missed a beat. So thank you very, very much.

For me it's a great pleasure to be back

here, several times I've been here, but back in Columbia. This is the one Tigers den that I'm always happy to walk into. And everybody involved should take great pride in this fantastic Show Me Games. It's marvelous, and our congratulations go out, of course, to all the competitors. I have only one regret, not that I can't compete with you all but that I won't get to see you in action.

The Governor has told me what a marvelous event this is. The games now are, what, in their 7th year, but the spirit really is as old as America itself. And you're all here to do your best in a tough competition. The Olympic creed, I'm sure some of you are

familiar with it, it really says it the best: "The most important thing is not to win but to take part; not to have conquered but to have fought well."

You come from all over this State, from all walks of life, from every age group. And your youngest competitor, from right here in Columbia, is 4 years old. He's out there somewhere, I guess. It might be hard to see him. He's a swimmer. We heard about the oldest competitor: Vernon Kennedy of Mendin is 85 years young, and I understand he specializes in throwing javelins. Maybe I will ask him to join me in the political wars that lie ahead. *[Laughter]*

This Show Me Games takes place at a momentous moment in our history. While you're warming up and working out, the Olympic athletes will be doing the same over there in Barcelona. I told the Governor that the head of our delegation, the national delegation, not the Olympic competitors themselves but the head of it, is a man who's been here to Columbia, Arnold Schwarzenegger, who is taking the message of fitness for America all the way across to those games.

They're going to be competing there against the long jumpers from marvelous new countries: Croatia, Slovenia boxers, Lithuanian basketball players, pole vaulters from what they call the Unified Team. And these places really didn't even breathe free just 4 years ago. And the simple fact is—it's reflected in these games for the very first time—is that the cold war that has obsessed the free world for so long is over. We won that cold war. The nations of the world said, "Show me." The nations of the world said, "Show me what democracy and freedom means. Show me a way of life I can aspire to." And guess what, we showed them. America showed them.

I believe now that we have changed the world, we can change and renew America. And you see, the new world brings both challenges and opportunities. The question is whether we can compete now that more and more nations are playing our game. Once we win this competition, and we will, our children will enjoy a prosperity that we can't imagine. And I really believe that.

Competing in this new world isn't going to be easy. It's going to require that we

change our way of doing business. One priority is to strengthen and restore, and John referred to this, strengthen and restore the building block of our Nation, represented here by so many today, the American family.

I think these Show Me Games might well be called the family games. I know of the Beaumonts, for example, who have come from Sparta to join in the games. It's the middle of the haying season, so dad Terry couldn't make it. But Cindy is here with four of her kids to participate in the shooting competition. And listen to what she says: "It's so easy these days for family members to be doing their own things. We work hard to do things as a family. We work hard, and we play hard." And that sounds like a Missouri family to me.

On a personal basis, I can relate to that. Family sports have always been a big part of our family life. I remember way back on the plains of west Texas back in 1948 and on in through the early fifties, coaching a team there on the Little League team, and Barbara remembers too, maybe not quite so fondly. She spent so much time carpooling our kids from one game to another that we get thank-you notes from the president of Texaco. Keep it up, he'd say. *[Laughter]* Of course, it didn't stop with Little League. There were hunting trips and swimming meets and tennis lessons and lots of fishing. And there's one great drawback to fishing with your kids: They keep you honest.

I'm reminded of a story about that great Missourian, Mark Twain. One time Mark Twain snuck off to do some fishing. It was off-season, which is why he had to kind of sneak around. But on the train back home, he couldn't resist bragging to the fellow next to him. And after he was done describing all the fish that he'd caught, Twain asked the guy what he did for a living. And the reply, "I am the State game warden. Who are you?" Twain almost swallowed his cigar, and he said, "Sir, I am the biggest darned liar in the entire United States of America." *[Laughter]*

He was stretching it a little bit, but there's no stretching how much these games mean to the fans and the competitors alike. And I love the motto. I love the

motto, "Show me what you're made of." Sports are about character, about shaping character, about nourishing it. When you take the time to teach your son to shoot a bull's-eye or teach your daughter to throw a strike, you're teaching more than a skill. You're teaching values, values like perseverance, sportsmanship, motivation, effort: priceless gifts that your kids will use long after you're gone.

Of course, the American family is under siege today from so many forces. But I have a plan to use Government to help keep these families together. And last year, we signed a new law that helps parents choose the quality of day care. Whether it's a school or relative's house or whether it's a local church, working parents ought to be able to choose where their children will be cared for. That keeps the family strong.

Similarly, you might ask about older kids who want to go to college but can't afford tuition. Well, yesterday we signed a new law expanding college financial aid, especially for middle class families who are squeezed by rising costs.

I think we'd all agree that it's pretty simple; you ought to be able to climb the ladder of education and reach your dream. And that's what we're trying to do. We're advancing ideas to make buying homes more affordable, to increase the tax exemptions for children. And for families on welfare, we want to create incentives for them not to fall apart but to hang in there, to stay together.

This morning, or just this afternoon, John, I met with Governor Ashcroft. You know, he is heading a very important Presidential Commission, a National Commission on America's Urban Families. And to get more ideas, we met to discuss what we can do to put the family back in the winner's circle.

Now, I've gone on a little longer, but I'm worried that Vernon Kennedy of Mendenhall might pick up his javelin and show me that I've been talking too long. So let me end.

And let me just say that the family remains our most potent weapon as a nation. America will always be first so long as we put the American family first.

Here in Columbia, and I'm sure the people from the rest of the State know about this, I think one of the favorite sons of Columbia is a graduate of Hickman High. He went on to make quite a name for himself, Sam Walton. He was a great achiever; we all know that. But he always knew that his greatest legacy would be the children he gave to the world. And that's why he made sure, in his own words, that his kids "received your everyday heartland upbringing based on the bedrock values, a belief in the importance of hard work, honesty, neighborliness, and thrift."

I know that in this sophisticated age, some people might find those home truths a little corny. But I don't, and I know you don't, either. We know what Sam Walton knew: Fashions come and go, but the old bedrock values never go out of style.

Let me say as I end this speech, I salute the mentors, the coaches, the mothers, the dads who bring out the best in these kids. Thank you from the bottom of my heart and the Nation's heart for what you are doing, not just to inculcate into these kids this competitive spirit but to hold together the American family in the process.

Now it is my pleasure to lead the athletes in the Olympic oath. And I leave here inspired. And let me just say, may God bless the United States of America, our great country. Thank you very, very much.

Note: The President spoke at 4:38 p.m. in Hearnes Center at the University of Missouri. In his remarks, he referred to Stephanie Patterson, Miss Missouri, 1992; Jordan Rentschler, Girl Scout Troop #382; Greg Mees, Boy Scout Troop #4; and the late Samuel M. Walton, founder of Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.